AMENDMENT OF THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-17 (Canceled).

Claim 18 (Previously Presented). A control method for a moisture meter, comprising:

heating a sample by sequentially raising a heating temperature to detect a time rate of change of moisture percentage for the sample, said time rate of change of moisture percentage being detected by measuring a change of mass of the sample during heating;

detecting at least one value of a pre-determined parameter of a time function related to said time rate of change of moisture percentage; and

determining and selecting an optimum heating temperature for the sample in accordance with the detected value of said parameter by determining a first value of the parameter at a subsequent heating temperature using a second value of the parameter at an immediately preceding heating temperature, comparing the first and second values, and in response to the comparison, determining and selecting the immediately preceding heating temperature as the optimum heating temperature.

Claim 19 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 18, wherein said determining includes determining and selecting the optimum heating temperature in accordance with a change in value of the parameter from the step of sequentially raising of the heat temperature.

Claim 20 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 18, further comprising:

determining an optimum heating time for the sample in accordance with time lapsed to reach said optimum heating temperature.

Claim 21 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 20, wherein the step of determining the optimum heating time includes determining a time rate of change of the parameter value in accordance with an accuracy threshold for the moisture percentage set by a user.

Claim 22 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 21, wherein the step of determining the optimum heating time includes determining said time rate of change of the parameter value of the time function wherein said time function is associated with a natural logarithmic function.

Claim 23 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 18, wherein the step of heating includes heating the sample and measuring the change in mass of the sample in accordance with an accuracy threshold for the mass of the sample set by a user.

Claim 24 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 18, further comprising:
displaying the determined optimum heating temperature to a user.

Claim 25 (Previously Presented). A machine-readable medium having stored thereon a plurality of executable instructions, the plurality of instructions comprising instructions to:
heat a sample by sequentially raising a heating temperature to detect a time rate of change of moisture percentage for the sample, said time rate of change of moisture percentage being detected by measuring a change of mass of the sample during heating;
detect at least one value of a pre-determined parameter of a time function related to said time rate of change of moisture percentage; and
determine and select an optimum heating temperature for the sample in accordance with the detected value of said parameter.

Claim 26 (Currently Amended). The medium of claim 25 ~~26~~, further comprising instructions to:

display the determined optimum heating temperature to a user.

Claim 27 (Previously Presented). A moisture meter, comprising:

a controller for heating a sample by sequentially raising a heating temperature to detect a time rate of change of moisture percentage for the sample, said time rate of change of moisture percentage being detected by measuring a change of mass of the sample during heating using a load sensor and an analog-to-digital converter;

said controller detecting at least one value of a pre-determined parameter of a time function related to said time rate of change of moisture percentage, and determining and selecting an optimum heating temperature, using a temperature sensor, for the sample in accordance with the detected value of said parameter.

Claim 28 (Currently Amended). The moisture meter of claim 27 ~~28~~, further comprising:

a display for displaying the determined optimum heating temperature to a user.